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# Ode
on
Marriage
of
Victoria.

1840.





# BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

## A Mask.



# BRITAIN'S GENIUS:

## A Mask.

COMPOSED ON OCCASION OF THE

## MARRIAGE OF VICTORIA,

Queen of Great Britain and Ireland,

TO

## PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

## THE REIGN OF YOUTH,

A Lyrical Poem.

BY THE REVEREND R. KENNEDY, A.M.,

FORMERLY OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1840.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY BLATCH AND LAMPERT, GROVE PLACE, BROMPTON.

TO HER MAJESTY

# Victoria,

QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

---

MADAM,

I ASSUME to myself the high honour of dedicating the two following compositions to your Majesty; and I venture to do so, without soliciting your royal permission, because one of them, on the present occasion of your marriage, has, necessarily, an immediate reference to your own sacred person. I have only to hope that my presumption will be pardoned on this account, as also from internal evidence, which will, I trust, be found in the composition itself, (however it may fall below the dignity of the subject,) that I have been actuated by sentiments of the purest loyalty, and by the most sincere wishes for the happiness of your Majesty, and your Royal Consort.

I have the honour,

MADAM,

To be, with profound respect,

Your Majesty's loyal Subject,

and most humble Servant,

R. KENNEDY.

## GENERAL NOTICE TO THE READER,

### RESPECTING THE TWO FOLLOWING COMPOSITIONS.

---

"THE REIGN OF YOUTH," (excepting only a few verbal alterations,) was composed many years ago. It was, however, but lately, that I engaged, and was about, to send it to the press, with some other pieces in verse, when I was told and became aware, that many persons would apply it to the marriage of our gracious Queen, and consider that I intended such an application to be made. I therefore resolved, somewhat suddenly, that, if I did publish it at all, especially now, I would write on purpose, and precede it with, something else which might in itself be more suitable—or which, as written by me, I should deem more suitable—for the present important occasion. I had written the first fifty lines of "BRITAIN'S GENIUS," before I enlarged my plan, and adopted the form of composition called a Mask.

R. K.

*The Hollies, Yardley,*
*Worcestershire; Feb.* 10, 1840.

# BRITAIN'S GENIUS:

## A MASK,

ON OCCASION OF

## THE MARRIAGE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

TO

## PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG.

## PERSONS IN THE MASK.

A MINSTREL *prologizing.*

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

*Spirits attendant on him.*

ARIEL, *their Monarch, accompanied by his Fairies.*

*Persons at a little distance, speaking from a shrine, on which a light shines.*

# BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

SCENE, NOT FAR FROM THE SHORE.

A MINSTREL *speaks.*

'TWAS not a baseless phantasy, or dream,
That mock'd my senses—or a dream it was,
Presenting shadowy the things which are,
And real sounds repeating. As I lay,
In waking trance, beneath a rock, the seas
Were all in motion, not provok'd by storm;
For birds of calm, upon their moon-lit surface,
Gently were riding. In a joyous mood,
Methought at times the wâters clapp'd their hands.
White surges mov'd, like crowds upon their way
To keep a gorgeous festival, and roll'd,

Wave after wave, as eager to impart
Their softly murmur'd kisses to the shore.
Under supernal influence they seem'd,
Or magic power; when, upward as I look'd,
Upon the cliffs, a giant form I saw,
Like an enchanter, with his lifted wand;
Envelop'd oft in mist, yet with his head
Above it rais'd. In him I recogniz'd
The Genius of our land. His eye appear'd,
Or through that eye, his sun-like mind, to view,
Near and remote, the nations of the world,
With all that characters their several fates;
Then homeward turn'd its glance, and though, at first,
While his great heart rose up into his face,
A shade of deep solicitude was there,
It was dispell'd, with a quick radiant flash,
By rising thoughts, of all that in the past
Britain had been, and all she yet must be.
Wisdom and "public care" upon his brow
Had a fix'd throne; and with them, might be seen
Firmness and noble fortitude, resolv'd
That what he willed or purpos'd should be done.

But see!—the height, whereon, half-veil'd, he stood,
He now is leaving, with a garb and mien
Less awful, as when mild relaxing Age
Prepares to join blythe boyhood's artless crew;
Or as an angel, that on gracious errand
Descends in mortal guise to mix with men.
To meet him, other denizens of air,
Spirits of lesser shape, are beckon'd forth,
And quit their cells, attending at his side—
Haply most semblant to an oak-crown'd troop
Of Druids, that, on Mona's shaggy mount,
Were known in ancient days. He, as their chief,
With loftiness of port, o'ertops the rest.
His movement, I conjecture, seeks with them
A verdant scene, near to this bosky glade,
Still and retir'd. The sea is *here* in view,
While *there* a country opens far and wide,
With cultured plains, the stir, and haunts of men.
But hearken!—for his voice may thence be heard.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

The happy day is dawning, when a Queen
Of Brunswick's stem, who sways these sea-girt realms,

Will give her hand in wedlock's bonds, to one
Of kindred German blood—a princely man,
Son of a ducal house, conjoin'd with those
Who now maintain the Ancient Faith restor'd,
For which (when conscience deemed it such) their sires
Rais'd up a standard against papal Rome:
Fit husband for the Queen of such a land;
Himself, like her, dispos'd to venerate
Our holy fanes, and verities receiv'd:
Himself, in duteous fealty to her,
Prepar'd to aid her, while she guards the laws,
And ever holds most dear a people's rights,
Which, thus secur'd, will best support a throne:
Himself, like her, in the bright bloom of youth;
To them a mighty nation looks, for much
Of present good, for more of good to come.
In anxious hope, with lowly trust in heaven,
On their expected progeny, the fruit
Of this auspicious marriage, it relies
For a transmission of its line of Kings.
It is with glad solemnity I hail
A day so big with Britain's destinies.

And lo! in her sky robes, from eastern hills,
The Morn comes forth, stately as virgin fair,
About to wed; when at the sun's approach,
Her cheeks, half pale, begin to wear a tint,
Like Expectation's glow. Her path the while
Is deck'd with flow'rets, which the courteous earth
Can now supply, though spring-tide be not come.
Let nought be heard or seen, to mar th' intent
Of such a goodly hopeful time as this.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRITS.

Hence! away with party Strife—
A three-mouth'd dog of hell;
Let not his barking now be rife,
Nor faintly audible in distant swell.
By dæmon Art from madden'd Folly bred,
Let not Rebellion more be found,
To show above the ground
Its fiery crest, and serpent head.
Let not Freedom's name be blent,
By factious Hate, with wild Sedition's yell,
Or croaking Discontent.
Aw'd by the sight

Of Loveliness and Majesty,
Hence let them flee,
To join the brood of Night,
Nor dare to linger mid the blushing light,
Till Truth and Loyalty, and high Disdain,
Shall chase them back to Stygian caves again.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

But hark!—now singly, with succession quick,
And now, collectively, around the isle,
Cannons, with bursting din, attention rouse!
They speak from ships, that proudly o'er the deep
Were wont to bear the thunder of its power,
With dread effect on foes and foreign shores;
While now, as giants in a peaceful mood,
They only raise their loud yet harmless voice,
To tell of this great holiday at home.

THE SPIRITS.

Harmless, no doubt, yet startling is their din,
From Albion's cliffs. Old Ocean with his waves,
And other coasts, might think it battle's rage.

But inland sounds there are, now waken'd up,
That shake us less, and more of pleasure give.

## BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

You hear, as I, the merry bells of England:
Can any country of the same extent
Boast of so many?—in their size and tone
Diff'ring, yet all for harmonies combin'd:
Cluster'd, in frequent bands, through towns and cities,
Lodgment they find in many a village tower,
And tapering spire, that crowns an upland lawn,
Or peeps from grove and dell; while now and then,
Modest and low, a steeple ivy-clad,
Behind a rock, reveals its whereabout
To the lone trav'ller, only by their tongue.
Art's work they are, yet in their tendency,
Somewhat like Nature to the human soul.
Rais'd up 'twixt earth and heaven, they speak of both;
They speak to all of duty and of hope—
They speak of sorrow, and of sorrow's cure.
Exultingly a marriage they proclaim,

And, I might guess, this royal one, to-day
Would give them motion, in their loudest glory,
Unless the present time be not in health.

SPIRITS.

No secret mischief will be found to plot
Where there is sympathy with public joy—
And 'tis pure joy that hallows this occasion.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

No angels weep to-day, as, it is thought,
They sometimes may, for that which forces groans
From widowed hearts, while human myriads
shout.

SPIRITS.

And yet man's Maker meant that he should be,
Oft as he can, most innocently glad.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

Doubtless he did—nor ever am I pleas'd
More than when British men, and most of all,

The sons of toil, give token of such gladness.
So were they custom'd. As the Year went round,
Oft from his train, with tale of fam'd event,
Or with a blest announcement from the sky,
A bright-fac'd Day, by some dear usage hail'd,
Stepp'd forth, and bade them everywhere rejoice,
All blithely summoned by the bells, as now.

SPIRITS.

'Tis happy for a land and for its people,
When the full spirits of the young and old
Shall thus flow out in artlessness of sport.
Waters, long pent, may swell to monstrous danger,
Sullen and still, with deluge in their power.
Far otherwise 'twill be, when timely vents
Give them to run in many a babbling rill
Through vales or down the rocks, and then disperse,
Yet leave a green effect on laughing fields.—
Still more and more we hear those pealing bells—
How true in tone they are!

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

Like them, I hope,
Are tribes that hear them talk. They have been such,
Yet may be jangled, without heedful care.

SPIRITS.

Sweet bells, oft heard, and most, if their discourse
Shall meet life's daily ear, act wholesomely
Upon life's daily mind.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

'Tis sure, at least,
From their companionship with sacred rites,
They have a charm that *helps* in making men
(Whose measur'd steps move thither at their call)
Listen aright to what in church they hear.

SPIRITS.

May British hearts be ever thus attun'd
With a sound loyalty to heaven's high King,

As now they show a loyalty in mirth,
Which pays due honour to an earthly Queen.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

The bells, at length, have reach'd the climax grand
Of congregated sounds: peals, one by one,
Were heard awhile to ring—first, from this hill,
And that responding vale, sudden, and near at hand,
Or widely flung, from distance, on the winds,
Majestical and sweet; then follow'd soon,
Thickly by others, with triumphant swell.
Now, with a gather'd strength, from every side,
Like armies, must'ring at the trumpet's call,
Their gratulations, all at once, assail
And fill mine ears, while echoes all around
From rock to shore their harmonies repeat.

THE CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

As if their sounds a kingdom's feeling told,
And from its depths were roll'd,
They mount—they meet in air,
Then only fall to rise,
And lift their billowy music to the skies.

Yet tones are mingled there
  Soft as a lover's lay,
Or Joy complaining of its own excess,
When heard from far, they seem to die away
In mellow'd tenderness.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

But still, ye bells, ring out your chimes,
  O'er waters, woods, and leas;
Call up the merriest olden times
  To live again in these.

ONE OF THE ATTENDING SPIRITS.

They live once more in yonder peopled vale,
Where hundreds meet from villages around—
Revels, and games, and pageantry, are there—
Banners are borne about, with quaint device,
Emblazoning this day's solemnity.
Each age and sex supply the motley scene
With actors in it, and yet more, with gazers.
On the church turret sunny gleams are bright,
And faces no less bright—windows and trees
Display them too—while oft a peeping child

Is lifted up, and clasps a parent's neck.
To tunes in unison with bounding hearts,
The feet of many twinkle through the shade—
Each human form becomes all eye and ear,
To what enraptures both—upon all sides
Frolic, and cheer, and jollity, are now
In every shape, the reigning business there.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

The laugh, the titter, and the mingled noise
Of talk, and clamour, all have caught my ear—
Then came a pause of silence, after which
A mighty shout was heard—and now I see
Through this long aisle of overarching shade,
A large procession hitherward advancing
To the same open spot, on which we stand.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

We hear, we see them come,
With rebeck, flute, and drum;
Before them we behold
One like a Robin Hood, or bowman bold:

Loyal, yet free,
And full of glee,
He waves his ruling hand,
As though 'twere his to personate
In solemn state,
The mirth of all the land;
Which oft, as on he strides,
Doth shake his bearded chin, and swell his panting sides.

*Here* BRITAIN'S GENIUS *and his Attendants retire into the Wood.*

THE VILLAGER *representing* ROBIN HOOD, *comes in with his procession; then he says:*

Now halt, now halt!—round me to form
A wide encircling band,
And silent be, until ye hear
The word of my command.

*They make a circle round him, and then he says,—*

Brave Englishmen, that to your kings
Have all good subjects been,

Prepare ye now, most lustily
To cry, Long live the Queen.

Prepare, with fire of gallantry
These loyal words to say;
Knowing she is a youthful Queen,
And this her wedding day.

Your wives must join, to be like mine,
When we have time to sing,
For Kate to me is then a Queen,
And I to her a king.

Prepare to join, unmarried youths,
Yet having wives in view,
That shall not scold, save now and then,
And always be most true.

Join me, ye buxom maids, and I
Will promise you a boon;
Many shall wed, ere ten months pass,
And some, by next new moon.

Let hats and kerchiefs all at once
Be toss'd, or wav'd on high;
While now your hearts and voices join,
In loud repeated cry;
Long live the Queen who rules these western isles!
Long live the Prince on whom Victoria smiles!

*They obey his command, and then he adds:*

Well done, well done!—then now return
By the woodside with me,
To raise once more the same glad shout
Around the hawthorn tree.

*The procession goes back to the Village Green.*

## PART II.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS, RETURNING WITH HIS ATTENDANTS.

The route is gone; and following their loud din,
Soft notes are heard at distance, here and there,
As if in honour of this hallowed time.

*The* SPIRITS *together and successively.*

On this day's theme
Alternate melodies each other greet,
Varied and sweet;
Such as haunted Avon's stream,
When near it Shakspeare lov'd to dream.
Such as float upon the gale,
Where Shannon's waters glide;
Such as often sing a tale,
To bonny banks of Clyde;

Such as wont of old to come,
In wizard hum,
From vying harpers in a Cambrian vale.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

The strains I hear, denote, that now call'd forth,
Fanning mild æther with their viewless wings,
The Fairies are at hand. They will not fail
To seek this place, as one of old resort;
Lest they be scar'd away, I will withdraw
Into this cave, yet not be out of hearing.
Come with me, other spirits—all but one,
Whom I should wish to hold some converse with them.

ARIEL, *and a* BAND OF FAIRIES.

Here let us light, where we have often met,
But never with more joy than on this day,
Known and proclaim'd through all our elfin realms.
A royal wedding, 'tis our privilege,
And ever has been, in the British isles,
To celebrate with special gladsomeness.

FAIRIES.

We come with garlands fair
To greet a royal pair;
We come to trip and sing,
In a merry, merry ring;
And while through its mazes, our quick feet are running,
Our best roundelay we will warble with cunning,
Since we meet on the sands, or else on the green,
For lovers to sing, and to dance for a Queen.

ATTENDANT SPIRIT.

Ye courteous fairies, let me ask of you
And of your chief, if ye can tell me where
To find the nymph, who makes a wedding day
Only as one, which through an open'd gate,
Shall lead to many, not so gaily drest,
Yet cheerful as itself. Where does she tarry?

FAIRIES.

You mean the nymph, that knows to bless
Earthly homes with happiness.

By ourselves, on British ground,
As we wander up and down,
She not seldom has been found,
In the hamlet and the town.

ONE FAIRY.

In a cottage she will stay,
With a little troop at play,
Or kneeling when they see her pray.

A SECOND.

I have spied her in low room,
With the weaver at his loom;
I have often mark'd her sitting,
With the house-wife at her knitting.

A THIRD FAIRY.

She, 'mid the city's noisy crowd,
(A storm *without*, oft raging loud,)
Has calm *within*; nor aught will fear,
While she moves in duty's sphere.

A FOURTH.

I have seen her by a rock,
Tend the shepherd with his flock,
List'ning to the nightingale,
In a thicket of the dale.

ATTENDANT SPIRIT.

But will she come to canopies of state,
And visit costly chambers of the great?

ARIEL.

At lordly tents her presence will be given,
When virtues call, and vows ascend to heaven.

FAIRIES.

Then she will there,
On cherub wings of praise and prayer,
Mount like a lark that carols in the air;
And while her voice is telling
Where she on earth has dwelling,
Higher and higher will she rise,
Till she has reach'd the palace of the skies,

And thence returning, will bring down,
What many a king would purchase with his crown.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT.

Come, therefore, come!—domestic Peace!
And with Victoria live;
Nor ever may'st thou cease,
Upon Victoria's head,
Thy choice delights to shed;
And let them be a dower,
The best a Queen can give,
To share with Albert in the regal bower!

FAIRIES.

She, thus invok'd, will come. We fays will haste
And whisper these glad tidings to the Prince.

ARIEL.

Yet, for a while, beside me stay,
And let me know, I pray,
What each would say.
Rehearse it now in my own ear,

As if the Prince were near,
Tell it me here.

*(Speaking to* ARIEL, *as if to the Prince.)*

FIRST FAY.

How peerless, princely Albert, is thy lot,
To meet with such a wife in such a Queen!
Being a Queen, she deigns to be thy spouse,
Only for love; that in both characters
She may be found, whatever love can make her:
Then is she not to thee a queen of wives?

A SECOND FAY.

She is thy glory, not her crown—yet that
As worn by her; then, more than if 'twere thine,
Thou wilt delight in lessening to her head,
The weight of cares which on its wearer press;
And thou wilt be most valiant to defend it.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS, *from the hollow rock.*

Thou must defend, if need require,
When, 'mid the swords, which countless round
the throne,

Against its foes would raise their flaming ire,
Must shine in front thy own.

(THE FAIRIES *start back, on one side, and then say*—)
What voice was that?—we fairies fly,
Nor can we stay to hear it nigh.
'Twas awful as a lion's roar,
Or mighty Ocean calling to the shore—
We feel, we feel the ground
Tremble beneath us at the sound!

THE FAIRIES *timidly returning*, A THIRD FAY *speaks.*
My breath I have recover'd, and would thus
Accost the Prince.—Thou never can'st possess
The nation's diadem; yet in its stead
Thy spouse will oft be crowning thee with smiles
That glisten on her lip, and dimpled cheek,
Or in her eyes, where a soft melting thought
May turn them, now and then, to liquid pearls,
That shame all other gems.

FOURTH FAY.

At times, perchance,

Amid those smiles, as emblems of their meaning,
But only half their meaning, shall her hand,
With winning grace, entwine around thy brow
A myrtle wreath, join'd to a wreath of bays;—
*That*, for *her* love—*this*, for *thy* poesy. (a)

FIFTH FAY.

Thus, Albert, shall it be. Sweet privacy
Shall make her queenly goodness to thyself,
Like solar light when brought within a prism,
For thee to feel, with thine own heart, its warmth,
And all its beauteous colours to admire.

SIXTH FAY.

Mark now the moon—a bard is often wont
To mark her well—fair empress of the night,
That heav'n's high sphere and earth beneath illumes;
Yet not the less, in narrow woodland glen,
Her gleam of radiance may be thought to rest
Only on one, whose eye shall woo it there.
And it may look, reposing on a bank,

Like Sleep that dreams of him. What thus the
moon
Can but *appear* to such an eye, thy spouse
In deed and truth shall ever be to thine,
Reserving for it every softest glance;
While, in her rule, and by example too,
She, as a Queen, must shine for all the land.
Then, in return for all she is to thee,
May'st thou, O Prince! (and 'tis thy bosom's wish)
Although a subject, ever prove to her
More than a king in nobleness of love!

ALL THE FAIRIES TOGETHER.

More than peopleth Fancy's beam,
More than poet's heart can dream,
May ye each to other be,
In a blest reality!

## PART III.

A FAIRY.

Our part we have performed, on this high day;
And tuneful wishes we have breath'd, that bliss
With a full cup, may royal lips regale.
But ere we fly, (more deeply to infix
Thy former lessons on our memory,)
Tell us, kind Ariel, monarch of our race,
What means can minister in wedded life
To such felicity as all desire?

ARIEL.

As I have heard, and specially for those
Who "neither toil nor spin," one requisite
Is knowledge, still increas'd, that gives the mind
Pure pleasures, ever new, nor suffers it



To stagnate unemploy'd; suggesting oft,
Converse, which, whether grave or playful, may
instruct,
While over it Discretion shall preside.

THE SAME FAIRY.

'Tis true; but while "the many" cannot gain
Such knowledge, and increase it, yet must all
*Virtues* possess, without which, no advance
In human lore, promotes an end so great.
To these thy strain alluded:—what are they?

ARIEL.

Methinks I see them all, together met;
The group first shows me self-forgetting Love
Upon the breast of faithful Truth reclin'd;
Near them is Kindness, ever on the watch,
To say and do, becomingly, in season,
A thousand little things, little themselves,
Yet wond'rous in effect when thus combin'd.
Meek Pity there is seen; and Gentleness,
That, when she chides, can please. Forbearance
too,

Whose hand is sometimes plac'd upon her brow,
While she beneath it shews a pensive smile.
Sincerity is there, that probes a wound
Only to heal; while Patience lends her aid,
And seeks to conquer, by enduring, ills.

THE SAME FAIRY.

There is, I ween, another virtue still,
Well known to us: we Fairies call the nymph
Simplicity, that has not learnt to think
Evil of others; and in nature's works,
Her humblest works, still finding much of good
And loveliness, will cull or point it out,
For others to be pleased with, like herself.
She is a fav'rite of our elfin tribe.
We flit about her step, in many a scene,
Cultur'd or wild; in flower-embroider'd walk,
In copse, or glade, by fountain, lake, or stream.
We notice when she stops, and aught by her
Is mark'd or listen'd to. The grand or fair,
Still finds a mirror in her crystal eye,
And a sweet sound is echoed by her heart.

ARIEL.

I now am minded of one Virtue more,
Needful in every place, but most in such
As form a contrast to those lone retreats.
Of palaces I speak, and princely halls,
If peace and confidence are wish'd for there;
The virtue which I mean, is Prudence call'd—
Never forgetting what and where she is,
In act or word—a law unto herself,
With finger on her lip, she gives a law
To every tongue within or near the gates.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT.

Well have ye spoken, gentle fays and elves,
What I have heard—yet virtues now describ'd,
(Promoting purposes most dear to all,)
Are mainly private, though not wholly so;
But there are Virtues, public in their bearing,
Too numerous for my tongue now to recount, (b)
Many of which directly appertain
To those who guide a state, and who on earth
Must ever look to the great King in heaven,
That they may rightly govern, under Him.

Such as they need, and other Virtues too,
Should all be train'd by Piety, and still
For growth and nutriment, be fed by her
With manna from on high. May they who rule,
Be blest in their own homes, and thence derive
(Living for multitudes besides themselves)
Fresh zeal to aim, as far as in them lies,
At spreading such blest homes throughout a realm!
But see! where Britain's Genius comes again,
With my associate spirits, lately here.
Their hands are all in one direction turn'd—
'Tis clear that something wond'rous meets their sight.

*(The Fairies departing.)*

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

Is it a vision that presents itself?
Behold through yon bright vista, what a scene
Bursts on the eye! Upon a lofty mount,
View'd from all sides, a solemn shrine appears,
At which a female worshipper is kneeling,
Her head encircled with a golden crown:
A light is on the shrine, as if 'twere pour'd



In a long stream from empyrean day,
And came through clouds, which picture Times
gone by:
The wise, the great and good, that once had liv'd,
That once had rul'd or counsell'd, fought or bled,
For Britain's weal, and in a holy cause,
Amid those clouds appear to hover round—
The wise, the great and good, now living, seem
Collected near that worshipper; yet all
Below herself, and with descending ranks
Of pious crowds, down to the wide-spread base.—
And hark! (while many lesser shrines around
At varying distances repeat the same,)
What voices thence, successively pour forth
The words of supplication, sometimes mix'd
With solemn music? Hark!—they reach our ears.

*Voices from persons not distinctly seen, yet coming from the shrine on which the light shines.*

Sovereign of all!—from thy eternal throne,
Look down with favour on our Queen, we pray:
With glory to Thy Name, make Thou this day
Fruitful to Her, in good alone;
Fruitful in good, to all beneath her sway.

Teach her to know Thy ways,
And shew forth, Lord, thy praise;

To her, for Councillors, the taught of heav'n,
Let Wisdom and Integrity be given.

Long may she reign, and reigning see
A people blest, obeying her, and Thee.

May the land still, while useful arts increase,
Be strong for war, yet wise for peace.

While priests are cloth'd in purest dress
Of truth and righteousness,
In every rank, on every side,
Be knowledge multiplied.

May rich and poor, the high and low,
Their mutual duties know;
And in those duties done, when understood,
Most surely find their common good!

May all be taught the christian law of love,
For concord here, and bliss above!

Thus let the Nation's light of practice shine,
And prove to distant lands her faith divine ;
Then, haply then, with heaven on earth begun,
May distant lands be made, with her, as one,
The kingdoms of the Lord, and his anointed Son.

BRITAIN'S GENIUS.

I will not venture more to hear such words,
Perchance too sacred for a time like this—
I left my haunts, and only meant to keep
High festival to-day. The fairy folk
Have disappear'd, in farewell flight; and I
With my attendant spirits will retire:
Yet whensoe'er, as now, we leave our cells,
This strain by us, around each rock and cave,
Shall oft be chaunted to the wind and wave—
"Long live the Queen, who rules these Western
Isles!
Long live the Prince on whom Victoria smiles!"

## NOTES TO THE MASK.

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*(a)* Prince Albert is known to be a Poet.

*(b)* Shakspeare makes Macbeth thus enumerate such Virtues.

"The King-becoming graces,
Are justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude."

MACBETH.



# THE REIGN OF YOUTH.

## A Lyrical Poem.





# PREFACE

TO

# THE REIGN OF YOUTH.

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I HAD originally sketched out, on this subject, a much longer Poem, to be written in the Spenserian stanza; but this design was given up from the following incident. I happened to be present, when a little boy, about four years old, who had probably never seen a musical instrument, was brought into a room where a Lady was sitting with a harp before her. She struck it in a sudden way, to attract his notice. He instantly started back, and went behind the female who attended him. The lady then played a soft tune. He had been creeping near to her side, while she was doing this; and

when she stopped, he gave the harp a stealthy blow, and again ran away. Something similar to this has, no doubt, been witnessed by many other persons; and one or two remarkable instances have been reported to me. On the spur of the moment, while I was thinking of my intended poem, I wrote what I have said about music in my description of Wonder, which, therefore, (excepting only the fancied addition of an echo) is simply a representation of what I actually saw; and not copied, as might perhaps be supposed, from Collins's picture of Fear, nor yet from some striking verses by Sir Philip Sidney, which I have not now an opportunity of quoting.

The lines which I thus composed, flowed almost involuntarily, in a lyrical irregular measure; and determining, in consequence, to compress the matter of my larger projected work into the shorter compass of an Ode, I soon after wrote the exordium of it, nearly as it now stands. I still intended, that, following the successive phenomena of the mind, as exhibited in youth, the poem should be a connected whole, agreeable to the argument which is prefixed to it. I retain this argument, though at the moment when I was sending my poem to the printer, I received from a learned and intelligent friend of mine, an analysis of it, which he had often expressed a wish to supply me with, when I published the Reign of

Youth. I find it much longer than I had expected. It goes beyond an illustration of the Poem; and may be read with interest as a separate essay in prose, by no ordinary metaphysician, on the characteristics of the youthful mind. It is printed, after a few notes of my own.

## ARGUMENT OF THE POEM.

THE following Ode is designed to illustrate, with the colouring of poetry, yet, at the same time, with philosophical correctness, the attributes and passions of youth, as they manifest themselves in the order of nature.

When the mind is in the first stage of developement, through the exercise of the senses, one of its earliest emotions is, Wonder; a term intended to designate the interest, frequently mingled with apprehension, which is excited by the novelty of the objects that awaken the attention of a child.

The succeeding characteristics of boyhood, are obviously sportiveness and mirth, an impatience of restraint, and that bounding elasticity of spirit, which is the natural concomitant of vigorous health.

But the enlarging capacity of the youthful mind, soon creates a general desire of some undefined enjoyment, which it has not yet experienced; and the world having been already coloured by the imaginative faculty, visionary anticipations are successively formed and dispersed, like the bubbles which arise upon a bright stream.

It is only after such anticipations have been disappointed, that hope, as a passion, is called into action; and that the mind, dissatisfied with the present, looks for happiness to the future.

Not unconnected with this deepening interest in the drama of life, is the strong excitement produced by the terrible, the marvellous, and supernatural. But this is followed by the still more powerful influence of those intellectual and physical energies, which give birth to a thirst for independence, to daring enterprise, and noble aspirations. These are the distinctive properties of that generous Ambition, which is predominant in youth; and which yields only to the ascendancy of Love.

# THE REIGN OF YOUTH.

---

Θνητῶν δ' ὄφρα τις ἄνθος ἔχῃ πολυήρατον ἥβης
Κουφον ἔχων θυμον πολλ' ἀτελεστα νοεῖ.

SIMONIDES.

WHEN Youth, from regions of eternal Spring,
On earth's expecting vales descended,
The laughing Hours, that round attended,
Proclaim'd the Fairy King. (a)

With graceful vigour and elastic bound,
He lightly touch'd the ground,
As though his feet could leave behind
The pinions of the Wind.
His breath had Nature's fresh perfume,
His cheek her vivid bloom,
Rich as the roses that his temples crown'd.

A sceptre in his hand was seen,
Wreath'd with budding evergreen.
His mantle, as it flow'd,
The vernal Year's impictur'd beauty show'd.

And, lo! from bowers and dells,
Where'er within their cells
The Passions lay entranc'd,
Swift on the plain,
His subject train,
The loveliest of their tribe advanc'd,
To keep the fairy reign.

First, newly waken'd by the breeze and wave,
The young-eyed Wonder sallied from his cave.
With step abrupt, and wilder'd gaze,
He trod the scene's mysterious maze.
Now he mark'd with coy delight,
The Sun all-glorious on the mountain height;
Now from the glancing rays
Withdrew his timid sight:
Again recoiling, as the lake display'd

His unknown image, and, across the glade,
Mov'd, like an airy sprite, his lengthen'd shade.

But who the rapt effect can tell,
When Music met him with her speaking shell?
He saw—he heard the trembling chords obey
Her cunning fingers, and he hied away,
Till soon o'ertaken by the tuneful spell,
Back to her side th' unconscious captive stole.
Then, as awhile she stay'd her sweet control,
On that strange shell, in playful mood,
He dar'd a mimic blow to try; (b)
Yet still, like one pursued,
Had half retreated, ere it made reply.
And when her touch drew forth a louder strain
By viewless Echo mock'd, from caverns nigh,
  On every side, at every sound
  Starting, he look'd around,
  And still he smil'd,
  Of thought beguil'd,
And starting, look'd again.

Next, O Youth! to welcome thee,
Sport prepar'd his jubilee.

From thickets pearl'd with dew
He on impatient tiptoe sprang to view,
With shrill uplifted horn, and call'd his sylvan crew.
Redoubling shouts before them sent,
Forth they rush from his greenwood tent,
With their high-flourish'd weapons of merriment,
Thy circled throne to greet.
Triumphal in air
A standard they bear
With many a garland deck'd, the prize of many a feat.

At the sight, a transport showing
From the bosom fresh and glowing,
Through the bright eye overflowing,
Loose or linked hand in hand,
Mirth leads up her frolic band,
With obliquely darted smiles,
Watching 'gainst invited wiles.

Health is there, that with the dawn,
Climbs the mountain, skims the lawn,
Oft on nectar feasted high,

Borne by zephyrs from the sky;
Wit, that strikes with gay surprise,
Jollity, that grief defies, (c)
And, loving every touch to flee,
The random-footed Liberty.
With half-shut eyes, ecstatic Laughter,
Almost breathless, totters after;
One hand holds her bending breast,
While t' other points at antic Jest.
Leisure, winding here and there,
Dallies hindmost, heedless where.

Thus, O Youth, to honour thee,
Thus they kept their jubilee.
Thus, to greet thee, all conspire,
All enchanted, all on fire,
As joys could never fail, and never tire.

Yet hitherward, adown the vale,
Where murmurs float upon the scented gale,
DESIRE was now espied,
Wand'ring the lonely stream beside,
With an unsettled air.
Behind him scatter'd blossoms lay,

Pluck'd in his eager haste, and idly thrown away.
For, light and fickle in the lack of care,
His visionary mind
Still pants for objects undefin'd;
And, as where'er he turns,
The wistful ardour burns,
Amid the peopled beams
Before him many a phantom gleams,
In every varied hue.
Though, hail'd in vain by his extended arm,
At some rude wind they take alarm,
And vanish from his view.
'Twas then a chillness on his bosom crept,
He gaz'd around, and wonder'd, till he wept.

But he has lost the quick-forgotten tear;
For Hope, the beauteous Hope, is near,
Earth-delighting prophetess,
That only knows to bless.
Bright as the morn that rises to behold
Ascending vapours turn to clouds of gold,
She dances on the plain,
As if her list'ning ear

Caught from afar a blythe inviting strain.
She courts the Future. Can he aught deny
To the simplicity of her bespeaking eye?
Between them Fays are on the wing,
And ever, through the sky,
To her the pledges of his favour bring.
She courts the Future, till successive Hours
In distant light array'd,
Look forth from arches open'd through the shade
That still is rolling round his misty bowers.
*This*, prankt with flowers,
Her notice greets;
*That* seems to sip
With rubied lip
A chalice full of sweets.
The next with gleaming torch displays
Fair blissful scenes—yet most attracts the gaze
By signs that fill the mind with more than vision meets.
Each is welcom'd, as it lingers,
With her kiss'd and beck'ning fingers.
If one should haply rise
In less alluring guise,

Hope does but mark, all cheerily the while,
Another, close behind, peep o'er it with a smile.

Yet ah! with gloomiest tidings on his brow,
A giant Wizard of the mountains, now,
Pale Terror came; and, while with cow'ring mien
A spell-bound troop were round him seen,
His lips essay'd dark mysteries to unfold.
But soon those quiv'ring lips were lock'd,
And his glaz'd eye-balls, in distortion roll'd,
Betoken'd things too dread for speech,
  Or shudd'ring thought to reach.
    The earth beneath him rock'd,
When mix'd with thunder, and the voice of waves,
  From black unfathom'd caves,
  Was heard a dreary cry,
That echoing seem'd in other worlds to die.
Then silence reign'd, but such as threw
On Expectation's front a ghastlier hue;
For, with a scowl of grim delight,
He told that from the realms of night
Unearthly shapes were hast'ning into sight.
When thus the magic work more fearful grew,

A wilder eagerness his votaries thrill'd,
And at each stir, or sound,
Above, below, around,
Shrinking they turn'd, or fell upon the ground,
Nor rais'd their heads till his behest was known;
For he could keep suspended, as he will'd,
Their sense and breathing; by his look alone
Could give them winged speed, or freeze them
into stone.

But hence! ye tremblers—hence, away!—
Flitting as shadows at the glance of day:
For who are these, that, next beheld in motion,
Come like the fresh resistless tide of ocean?

'Tis Intellect, arous'd as from a trance,
Intent, by nature's clue,
To wind through labyrinths, where, at each
advance,
Her unveil'd secrets meet the courting view.

'Tis young Disdain; with smile half turn'd,
On bounds his vaulting feet have spurn'd.

'Tis Strength that lifts his rampant form,
As he could ride and curb the storm.

'Tis Independence, on a rocky height,
Free as the tameless eagle, pois'd for flight.

'Tis Valour that has met the eyes
Of spirit-stirring Enterprise,
And watches for the prompted aim
At which to rush through flood and flame.

Yet these are but a herald band—
The Crested Chieftain is himself at hand;
These shall but wait
On his heroic state,
And act at his command.

He comes—Ambition comes; his way prepare!—
Let banners wave in air,
And loud-voic'd trumpets his approach declare!
He comes!—for Glory has before him rais'd
Her shield, with godlike deeds emblaz'd.
He comes, he comes!—for purposes sublime

Dilate his soul; and his exulting eye
Beams like a sun, that, in the vernal prime,
With golden promise travels up the sky.
Onward looking, far and high,
While before his champion pride
Vallies rise, and hills subside,
His mighty thoughts, too swift for lagging Time,
Through countless triumphs run;
Each deed conceiv'd, appears already done,
Foes are vanquish'd, fields are won.
E'en now, with wreaths immortal crown'd,
He marches to the sound
Of gratulating lyres,
And earth's applauding shout his (d) generous bosom fires.
He comes, he comes!—his way prepare!
Let banners wave in air,
And loud-voic'd trumpets his approach declare!

Yet ruder sounds, O Youth, were hush'd awhile,
Nor had Ambition run his purpos'd race,
When Love at last appear'd, to claim thy smile,
And at thy side obtain the dearest place.

Leaving a diviner scene,
Where her dwelling erst had been,
By Zephyrs wafted in a pearly car,
To this sublunar element,
Her gliding course she bent,
And came through vernal mists, emerging like a star.
But first, O Youth, that she might be
Duly train'd for earth and thee,
On ambrosia Love was fed
In Fancy's charmed bowers,
Where his wand her footsteps led
Through mazes gemm'd with flowers;
Making earth to her appear
Like a higher kindred sphere.

Yet Pity, then, benignly meek,
With falt'ring voice, and moisten'd cheek,
To Love reveal'd, that Pain and haggard Woe,
Had found a place below.
And as she ceas'd, from grove and distant rill,
The sound was borne, of Nature's plaint,
Melancholy, low and faint—

A whisper to the heart, when all around was
still.
Love, scarcely breathing, bent her head,
And listen'd till her colour fled;
But, as it mantling came again,
Her eyes, all eloquent, express'd
An answer to the mournful strain:
For they proclaim'd, that in her bosom dwelt
Softness ineffable, a power and will
To conquer Strength, the fiercest Rage to melt,
To find a balm for life's severest ILL,
And lull the Sorrows of the earth to rest.

Thus Pity's influence o'er her soul,
Heightened Fancy's rich controul.
Love from Pity learnt the sigh
That saddens, but endears;
From Fancy learnt the rapture high,
That trembles into tears.

Each o'er her slumbers bent,
And both their inspirations lent,
(Like rainbow tints, in dewy lustre blent,)

As in a flowery cave she slept,
Where bees, that had from Eden stray'd,
Its native honey to her lips convey'd;
And by the murmuring which they kept
About her golden hair,
Lur'd from the sky such visions fair,
As Eden knew, when Innocence was there.

Love woke, and moving with empassion'd grace,
Attemper'd to the music of her thought,
She look'd as one that trod the liquid air,
While, from some hov'ring angel presence, caught,
Reflected radiance blush'd upon her face.
Yet, as a lily droops, with moisture fraught,
Soon by her own rapt consciousness opprest,
At Pity's side she knelt, with heaving breast,
And seem'd to ask, in gentle grief,
If sweet illusion mock'd her fond belief.

But Fancy near, in triumph mute,
Still round her wav'd his wings.
For though she courted Pity's lute,
And bade it speak of tears,

Of sighs, and tender fears,
Yet would she bend to kiss the strings,
As in their silver tone,
The spirit of her dream
Had told of bliss alone.
Her brow she rais'd,
And upward gaz'd,
As if her soul on one exhaustless theme
Would fain for ever dwell.
Then smil'd, as bidding mortal tongues despair,
That wond'rous theme's entrancing power to tell;
And still would sighs, pursued by smiles, declare,
She felt a pain that spurn'd relief, and bliss too
sweet to bear.

Thus taught to smile and sigh,
Love now to Youth drew nigh.
The conscious heavens o'er her head,
Their blandest influence shed;
And on the earth, her very sight
Had all things wak'd to soft delight.
The Elements, with mutual greeting,
Gave sign that Love and Youth were meeting.

The balmy Air with humming sound,
And sun-kiss'd pinions quivering o'er the ground,
Calls verdure, fragrance, life and bloom, around.
Smoothly the forests now
Their shaggy honours bow;
And up from lowly nests in mead or glen,
Ambitious warblers rise,
That task, with twinkling plumes, the dazzled ken,
Or lost in light, convey, earth's gladness to the skies.
Voices, meanwhile, from other spheres,
Saluting mortal ears,
With chime of song from land and ocean sent,
Mingled their melting ravishment.
And this the lay, to mount, and vale, and shore,
That each enamour'd wind, in tuneful concert bore—

"Turn, hither turn thine eyes, O Youth,
Love's choice ordain'd to be;
And haste to learn the blissful truth,
That Love was form'd for thee.

"Take her, that Love in thee may find
All that is imag'd in her mind;
Take her, that Love to thee may give,
What most shall make it life to live.

"No sweeter prize can earth provide,
To crown thy guardian care:
Oh! take her, as a Queen and Bride,
Thy golden reign to share."



# NOTES TO THE REIGN OF YOUTH.

(*a*) As I could not describe Love, in its effects, except as a female, it was required by my plan, to make Youth a male; and I might observe, that, in the classical mythology, Youth is represented, not only by Hebe, but in some measure, by Bacchus, the beardless Apollo, and Mercury.

(*b*) *A mimic blow to* TRY.—Gilbert Wakefield has the following singular note on the verb "try," in this line of Gray.—

"The stings of falsehood those shall *try*."

"This and the word *prove* are constantly used in this contemptible manner, even by our correctest poets." Now I really know no instance, in which the verb *try* is used in the same vague manner, as I allow the word *prove* often is. But, in point of fact, in this passage of Gray, he has mistaken the nominative case to the verb

try, which is, "the stings of falsehood," and not the pronoun "those;" and then the verb *try*, in the sense of "putting them to a severe trial," is the strongest and best word which could be used. In my line, I use the verb as signifying, "to make an experiment of," or an endeavour to do, what another had been seen to do; and I annex the epithet "mimic" to the word "blow," to show more distinctly what I mean, in the process carried on by the imitative principle connected with Wonder.

(*c*) Milton has the line,

"Sport that wrinkled care derides,"

And before him, Fletcher, in the Purple Island, had these lines :—

"There sportful Mirth, and Laughter ever sitting,
Defy all lumpish griefs, and wrinkled care."

(*d*) *His generous bosom fires.*—Ambition, in the young, is not the pursuit of power, but the love of glory; a desire (in those who are well-educated,) of *distinction* in that which is really *excellent*, or which is commonly esteemed so by the world. It may, (as Mr. Burke says) take a wrong turn, and seek to be distinguished by follies, vices, and defects.

(*e*) *She looked as one that trod the liquid air.*—Mr. Burke has spoken of what he calls "the physical causes of Love." Without stating them, he alludes to "the *means* by which the passion may have its first origin in the *mind*."—My chief object has been, to exhibit these means, by the reciprocal agency of Fancy and Pity, as increasing each other's influence on the creature acted upon. So far as I have gone beyond the moral to the physical concomitants of love, I have joined with smiles, "the slowly-drawn breath, and the low sighs," which he speaks of. I have mentioned the further phenomenon of "seeming to move on air," which, in the first transports of successful love, is a fact which I have seen stated, as such, in a philosophical treatise, and in narratives.





# A LETTER

TO THE

# AUTHOR OF THE REIGN OF YOUTH.

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My Dear Sir,—

I have lately been attempting to draw up a metaphysical analysis, (as I sometimes threatened that I would do,) of your allegorical poem entitled "The Reign of Youth," with a view to ascertain the degree of philosophical accuracy displayed in your disposition and grouping of the Passions, according to the different periods of that season of life.

The characteristics of boyhood, are, as you represent or imply, principally, if not exclusively, Wonder and Curiosity, the social and imitative propensities, the sentiment of the beautiful and sublime, unceasing elasticity of

spirit, and boundless love of action. Some of these attributes clearly belong to our earlier stage of existence, viz., infancy and childhood, during which we have become acquainted with the ordinary course of events in the little world around us; yet, retaining no recollection, and having been almost unconscious of the state of mind accompanying our sensations, we cannot form a conjecture as to the nature of our primary feelings. It is probable, as philosophers have supposed, that the feeling of Wonder would not arise in the infant mind, on the occurrence of any events, *all* of which may be regarded as originally new to it; whereas Wonder implies such a knowledge of things as to cause an expectation of their continued recurrence as heretofore. It is when any apparent deviation from this course takes place, that we are seized with astonishment.

This Passion, therefore, may be justly considered as cöeval with that period of youth, at which you represent it as called into existence; nor need I observe, that so far as the mental development is concerned, and indeed the happiness of that happy age, it is, while almost the first, at the same time the most important. It is by the first impressions of Wonder that Curiosity is awakened, and by the constant repetition of them that it is perpetually kept up; being at once an unfailing source of

agreeable surprise, and also a stimulus to active efforts for the attainment of its own gratification. It thus gives rise to the desire and eager pursuit of knowledge; and with what success at the dawning, as also in the more advanced periods of boyhood, we need hardly stop to enquire. It is universally allowed to be almost marvellous.

If all human science and attainments were to be divided, (as an eloquent writer suggests) into two portions, the one comprehending what is common to all, and principally acquired in the years of infancy and youth—the other, that stock of truths which is peculiar to the wise and the learned, it can scarcely be an extravagant paradox to assert, that the latter portion would seem very trifling in comparison with the former.

But your portraiture of Wonder embraces two other affections, frequently inseparable from it, and highly influential on the youthful mind—the one an active principle, the other a passive but powerful sentiment. In the existence of these causes of surprise which are beyond our reach, we are content to have our curiosity satisfied by *explanation* alone; but in those excited by the agency of other human beings, however great the pleasure received, it is never complete without an effort on our own part to imitate and perform the same. No sooner

have we seen, or heard, and wondered at such effects, than we feel in eager haste to assure ourselves that we also can produce them. But even in the pleasurable act, from our ignorance of the mode of their production, we are never perhaps entirely exempt from *apprehension*. The influence of this *imitative* principle may in part be imagined from the above-mentioned operation of curiosity alone; and such curiosity, combined with this new principle, so unceasingly active in the youthful heart, and the constant love of action, is converted into an almost omnipotent engine in the development of the corporeal and intellectual faculties, both in youth and manhood, and also, in a great measure, in the formation of the present and future character. What pleasure do we feel, even at the earliest periods, in the consciousness and exercise of our bodily energies and senses! The infant is delighted with no wonders so much as those of its own production; when capable of executing one thing, he rejects it, and grasps at another, so often as new objects and actions are exhibited before him.

To complete the analogies, and fill up the picture of Youth and his mind, at this the opening tide of existence, it remains to add the passive but strong sentiment of the beautiful and sublime, which is evidently depicted in the movement of your ideal personification of Won-

der, and is in nature equally elicited with Wonder, by such objects as you have presented before your allegorical creature—the rising sun, the glassy lake, the woody glade, and music's delicious strains. This sentiment is perhaps even deeper and more pure than at a maturer age, for it springs directly from the aspect of the sublime and beautiful object itself, unwarped by numerous associations, and not weakened, as it may sometimes be, by the light which science shall afterwards throw upon it. Last, but not least, in this part of your drama, cheerfulness and social glee are exhibited in all their various characters and forms. To impel and sustain the unbounded activity of youth, so essential to the growth of its faculties and powers, it was necessary that pleasure should be annexed to its pursuits. Accordingly, to use the words of Dr. Brown:—"In the early period of life, the alacrity of spirit is like that bodily alacrity with which every limb, as it bounds along, seems to have a delightful consciousness of its vigour. To suspend the mental cheerfulness for any length of time, is then as difficult as to keep fixed for any length of time those muscles, to which exercise for a while is almost a species of repose, and repose itself, fatigue." But the hilarity of youth is not all of this unconscious kind and origin. The senses at every turn are pouring in a continual succes-

sion of objects and events to surprise, gratify, and to instruct; and the social principle, so strong and so unreserved in youth, is constantly awakening, or agreeably exciting those delightful sympathies of the heart, which, pleasant in themselves, unite us to each other, and double our joys, whilst they almost annihilate our sorrows. Yet activity will tire, and pleasure long pursued, and often repeated, will satiate, and be followed by listlessness and languor. This state, whether of body or mind, is represented in your picture of Leisure, who brings up the rear of the sportive train. It consists in a temporary suspension of the alacrity and vigour of both; in which the body receives a sort of luxurious pleasure from indolence, or repose; and the mind is suffered to wander passively wheresoever it will, without stimulus or controul, both of them to renew, with recruited strength, the long accustomed round of pleasure, or to find some new and larger theatre of action.

This larger scene is anticipated by Desire, which, indeed, is not limited to any one period of life more than another, inasmuch as in every period it is the source of all our voluntary actions and pursuits; yet in the season of boyhood, the desires, while they are ardent and impetuous, are almost equally evanescent, their objects few



and unimportant, scarcely extending to the future, and of short-lived, momentary interest. It is only when, with the growing expansion and consciousness of its capacities and powers, the mind takes an onward and prospective aim, and feels the want of objects of a more permanent interest, that Desire can be said to exist, as a fixed and powerful passion. Yet, while the wishes of youth, on the confines of boyhood and juvenescence, must necessarily be vague, unsettled, and visionary, the attempts to fill up the void which is felt, are attended, as you have shewn, with pain and disappointment.

Hope, however, is almost ever at hand, to dissipate the fears, and encourage the aspirations of youth. It is almost cöeval and commensurate with our desires themselves, and especially at this confident era of life, when the pride of our awakened and increasing powers (before doubt has been raised by failure or defeat) persuades us that every thing practicable is within the reach of our ability. This hope is always in proportion to the value we feel for the objects of our wishes, (which, though undefined, are always, in youth, dazzling) and to the degree of our assurance in the capability of accomplishing them. But Fear is the correlative of Hope; and, notwithstanding the confidence of this stage of youth, and its susceptibility of hope, it is also the age when the susceptibility

of the marvellous, the supernatural and the terrible, is at its greatest height. We see it in the avidity for legendary fictions, the wonders of mythology, and the deeds of fabulous heroes. It is true that this passion is greatly assisted by the imaginative faculty, which then exerts itself with uncontrollable activity; but it is felt independently of this. We do not read such things when young, as in maturer years, admiring the art and beauty with which the wonderful and superhuman are worked up into enchanting fictions, but rather for the great interest of the tale itself, an almost undoubting belief in its reality, during the perusal, and a vague apprehension of its possibility, even in soberer moments. It is Mr. Burke, I think, who has said, that in the dark, the boldest and least credulous mind is not exempt from fear; but it is of dangers of a different kind, and far less formidable than the ideal ones conjured up by the young.

These, however, are soon to be dispelled by the increasing light of nature, and the enlargement of reason; and are replaced by the clear view, the settled purpose, and independent feeling, derived from knowledge, which in their turn, are to be exerted and brought into action, through the instrumentality of mental and corporeal strength, enterprise and valour.

A new period has thus arrived, contrasted with that

*imitative* process, which, for a time, is used by Providence in bringing our nature towards its perfection. "Yet," as Mr. Burke observes, "if men gave themselves up to imitation entirely, and each followed the other, as in an eternal circle, it is easy to see that there never could be any improvement. To prevent this, there is implanted in man a sense of ambition, a satisfaction arising from a contemplation of his excelling his fellows in something deemed valuable amongst them."

Up to this period our pride and aspirations seem to be confined to the possession and acquisition of personal qualities, either of the mind or body, and to the pleasure and admiration which they can obtain for us, as such, and to the deeds which of themselves they can effect. We have first seen it in the delighted and conscious display of our superior bodily energies. We are afterwards equally desirous and proud of the like possession, and fame of superior mental endowments. But, in a short time, the results contemplated by youthful ambition, are the objects of its desire and self-congratulation, as much as the distinction which attends them. When the passion is of a generous and patriotic nature, (as it then commonly is) these objects necessarily affect, and are intended to affect, the interests and fate of whole classes and communities, even more than of the individual him-

self. Your picture of Ambition is of this noble character, and its qualities are beautifully implied, and illustrated, in that fine stanza of Gray.—

> "The applause of list'ning senates to command,
> The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
> To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
> And read their history in a nation's eyes."

The next and last passion, Love, is evidently in its right place. It is intelligible to all; and the use which you make of Fancy and Pity, for its formation in the mind, is equally recommended by its philosophy and its poetry. I need not give any analysis of it; but (as they relate chiefly to your delineation of this passion) I shall take leave to conclude my letter, with quoting the purport of some of the observations which were made upon "The Reign of Youth," by your late friend, the distinguished philosopher and poet, Mr. S. T. Coleridge. "Like a skilful magician, you have purposely kept yourself out of sight, as far as you could, while you caused a scenic exhibition to move before us. You have, therefore, properly given us *description* without *sentiment*—I mean sentiment *expressed,* for it is often *implied,* and finely implied in such lines as those beginning 'Her eyes proclaimed that in her bosom dwelt,' &c. On this account, however, I should conceive, that, notwithstanding the

lyrical harmony of its measures, your Ode is not, as a *whole*, well adapted for music; while no composition, of the same length, affords more scope for painting. In saying this, I am aware that, in general, painters had better not take their subjects from allegory; but allegory is here only a veil of gauze, thrown over reality; and your personifications are but other names for boys and girls acted upon, as you have represented them, under certain circumstances. Other parts may be quite as well worked up, but Wonder, Desire, and Love, appear to me the most original, especially the last. The movement, indeed, in your love scene, is slower and less dramatic than it had been, and something didactic is unavoidably admitted. But you have here treated a trite, and therefore difficult topic, with most ingenious novelty, and with so much of the truth of nature, that the figures in your metaphysical machinery, have the vivid appearance of flesh and blood."

I am, dear Sir,
Your sincerely attached and faithful friend,
J. Eccles, M.D.

*Feb. 6th,* 1840.

THE END.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY BLATCH AND LAMPERT, GROVE PLACE, BROMPTON.






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